

Some Questions Concerning Education

For some years the people of our country have been agitating for the abolition of the 11-years secondary education and thereafter 3-years degree course and going back to 10-year school course with $2+2=4$ years higher secondary and degree course in colleges. Most of them think that the new scheme is mainly responsible for the present chaos in education and fall in academic standard in our country. And, in fact, some of the states, like Orissa, have already reverted from the new scheme to the old one. The sub-committee set up by the Calcutta University to review the working of the new scheme has recently submitted its report recommending, in the main, replacement of the new system by the old one.

For refreshing the memory of our readers we like to remind them that when the new 11-years higher secondary course followed by 3-years degree course was going to be introduced in our country, it was our Party only that bitterly criticised and opposed the scheme at all appropriate levels from various platforms including that of the West Bengal College and University Teachers Association and the All Bengal Teachers Association where our workers and supporters had then been working to organise the teachers. The Democratic Students Organisation also under the guidance of our Party headed by Com. Shibdas Ghosh organised the students and conducted movements against the proposed new scheme. Unfortunately, we could not carry the universities and the school and college teachers' organisations with us; most of the teachers misled by opportunist leadership swallowed the bait of higher salary and better conditions of service thrown by the governments and the University Grants Commission (alas! the rosy promises then made still remain unfulfilled) and the new scheme was foisted on the students.

We then opposed the new scheme not for nothing. The

socio-political implication of it was clear to us. We foresaw its pernicious effects
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Convention on Bangladesh

Calcutta, December 5—Under the auspices of the West Bengal Peace Council a convention on Bangladesh was held here to-day. About 250 delegates participated in the convention.

The speakers, among others, included Com. Subodh Banerjee from SUCI, Prof. Basav Sarker from the CPI

and Prof. Nirmal Bose from Forward Bloc. Leaders from Bangladesh who addressed the convention included Messrs Abdus Samad Azad, member of the Awami League in the Consultative Committee of Bangladesh, Abdus Salam, Secretary, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Monoranjan Dhar, leader of National Congress of Bangladesh and Prof. Muzaffar Ahmed, President of National Awami Party of Bangladesh.

The convention adopted a main resolution and another resolution demanding immediate release of Bangabandhu Muzibar Rahaman. In the main resolution the demand for immediate recognition of the sovereign People's Republic of Bangladesh by the Government of India was reiterated.

In the afternoon a public meeting was held at Subodh Mullick Square which among others, was addressed by Com. Subodh Banerjee (SUCI), Messrs Ajoy Das Gupta (CPI), Moni Singh (CP of Bangladesh), Begam Motia Chowdhury (NAP) and Mostaque Sarwar (Awami League).

Com. Banerjee in his addresses characterized the present struggle by the people of Bangladesh as an armed anti-imperialist national liberation struggle for
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Central Committee's Statement

The Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India headed by Com. Shibdas Ghosh has issued the following statement to the Press:—

"The sudden and large-scale air attacks by Pakistan on six states of our country, five in the western sector and one in the east, have pushed our country to a very critical situation and a State of Emergency has been declared by the President of India.

"In such a situation unity of our people, irrespective of caste, creed and religion is of supreme importance both in the interest of defence and security of our country and in furtherance of the liberation struggle of Bangladesh.

"Hence, the Central Committee of the S. U. C. I. calls upon the people to firmly unite and face the situation boldly and at the same time remain alert so that the democratic and fundamental rights of our people like right to freedom of speech, association, assemblies and organisation, are not curbed in any way on the plea of Emergency.

"The Central Committee further calls upon the people to remain vigilant against those who will try to manipulate prices of essential commodities by hoarding and black-marketing taking advantage of the situation. The Central Committee urges upon the Government to take stern measures against those, whoever will be committing such anti-social activities and crimes.

"The Central Committee warns the people against the reactionaries and the communal forces who may try to fish in troubled water and disrupt the unity of our people.

"Lastly, the Central Committee again urges upon the Government of India to give without delay recognition to the Bangladesh Government which is long overdue, if we really wish the Bangladesh liberation struggle to achieve victory."

Dated, 4th December, 1971.

EDUCATION—SUPER-STRUCTURE OF ECONOMIC BASE

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on education, academic standard and the students community. It is known to all that education and education system is a super-structure of a given economic base. Like every superstructure, it also is designed to serve the base and when it comes into being, it not only maintains but also works to strengthen the base. It is for this reason that the ruling class in a country always introduces such a system of education as helps to maintain, consolidate and further strengthen its hegemony over society. Judged in the light of this historically scientific truth the purpose of introduction of the 11-years higher secondary education course and 3-years degree course becomes clear. It aims at maintaining, consolidating and further strengthening the bourgeois rule in our country and serving capitalist interests in the best way possible under the circumstances.

As far back as August, 1957, Secretary of the All India Democratic Students Organisation issued a statement opposing the new scheme. The statement, among others, contained the following: "The Academic Council of the Calcutta University and earlier its Senate have sanctioned the introduction of the Central Government's proposed scheme of 11-years school course and 3-years degree course for ten years on an experimental basis. We strongly oppose these decisions of the Senate and the Academic Council. We are convinced that this new scheme, in the name of "improvement of education" and "reform of education", is directed to implement the Government's sinister policy of curtailment of higher education. ** Under the proposed scheme the scope of higher education in humanities, science, engineering, medical science, etc. which has already become very

limited will become still more limited. We strongly feel that faced with mounting crisis of the capitalist economy and increasingly rising movement of the educated unemployed for employment, the Government very shrewdly has been trying to curtail even the existing scopes and opportunities for education, particularly higher education. Besides, on the plea of industrialization of the country, the Government is giving more emphasis on technical education of elementary nature to the utter neglect of higher studies in humanities and science. Particularly designed, it will create great obstacles in the path of raising the culture of the people and the academic standard of the students. We, therefore, strongly condemn the hypocritical slogan for "educational reforms" thrown by the Government instead of honestly striving for cultural upliftment of the people." (*Ganadavi*, dated 1st August, 1957).

In April, 1962, our Party made the following observation: "In reality, for the last fifteen years the Government has been pursuing the education policy with the sole purpose of curtailing education by all means in order to protect capitalist interests. As the inevitable outcome of the existing capitalist economy of our country a acute unemployment is prevailing. A large section of the unemployed people is the educated unemployed. This huge number of educated unemployed persons is posing a threat to the capitalist order. For this reason with a view to reducing the number of educated unemployed persons the Government is curtailing the scope of higher education by raising expenses for education as also by introducing seat restriction scheme in schools and colleges." At that time we referred to the observation made by Mr. C.D. Deshmukh, the then Chairman of the

University Grants Commission in this regard to substantiate the correctness of our above analysis.

Over and above this move to curtail education the Government had another point in view. The Congress Government at the Centre is now laying the foundation stone of fascism in our country. In the economic sphere this is being sought to be done through the adoption of social-democratic economic measures like planning, nationalization of banks, life insurances, general insurances and other industries in the aggregate interest of Indian monopoly capitalism. In conformity with this drive for economic centralization, fusion of state capital with private monopoly capital thereby giving birth to state monopoly capitalism and gradually subjugating the state monopoly interests nakedly, the ruling bourgeoisie in our country is trying to take away the autonomy of the schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutions and impose government's control over them by various means starting from granting of aids and assistance hedged with conditions suitable for the purpose to naked threat of supercession of the different bodies under them, in order to make way for attempts to regiment thought and weed out leftist and democratic elements among the teachers and other employees of the educational institutions. The latest drive in this direction is the repeal of the old Act and promulgation of the Ordinance assigning to the Government absolute power to take over the administration of the Viswa Bharati University and completely doing away with the autonomy of it. The new 11-years school course followed by 3-years degree course scheme is part and parcel of the general education scheme for imposing government's control over

the academic world, regimentation of thought and fascization.

It is not only from this socio-political point of view that we opposed and still oppose the new scheme. From academic point of view also we were and still are opposed to it. We held that mere structural change or change in the pattern of studies will not improve the academic standard. They may rather bring about a deterioration in the quality of the product of education. In the old system a student after completing 10-years school course and passing the public examination had to undergo studies for two years in his intermediate course in a college and pass another public examination before being eligible for being admitted in the degree course. The ten years' schooling providing general education followed by two years' study in humanities, science or commerce according to choice in the intermediary course in the college, necessarily better staffed with better facilities for library, laboratory and curricular studies compared to the school, provided relatively better scope for attaining the academic standard necessary for being admitted to the degree course in comparison with the new scheme where diversification starts after class VIII when the student is hardly 13 to 14 years old with hardly any capacity to choose the line and where important parts of the curricular studies formerly done in the college are to be completed in the school with much less improved facilities for studies. This would create a serious gap causing deterioration of academic standard. This has actually happened proving our the then open apprehension cent per cent true.

But none, not even the so-called progressive intellectuals and educationists belonging to the big so-called left parties, paid any heed to this note of

DRIVE TO REGIMENT THOUGHT

caution sounded by our Party. They were lured by uncertain gain of some financial benefits and better conditions of service promised by the University Grants Commission exhibiting utter unconcern for education and the students community. The Universities where the new scheme could be effectively resisted were bluntly told that the proposed financial help from the University Grants Commission was conditional on the acceptance of the new scheme. In the face of this blunt attack these universities suffering from serious financial difficulties surrendered to the Government. Those educationists who voted for introduction of the new scheme but now want to go back to the old pattern may kindly consider what harm their weak-kneed policy and personal consideration of some financial benefits to themselves has wrought on education, academic standard and the students, who, it seems, are nothing but guinea pigs for wild experiments to the so-called educationists and the Government, otherwise reckless experiments in the name of educational reforms would not have been made so frequently in our country in the post-independence period.

While agreeing that the new scheme is to a very large extent responsible for the fall in the academic standard and while supporting any realistic and scientific move to raise that standard we like to point out that the academic standard cannot be raised by merely changing the pattern. The problem is inextricably linked up with the problem of cultural and moral degradation that our society is facing now. In the absence of an all-embracing scientific world outlook integrating the different branches of knowledge, compartmentalized purely technical knowledge in the name of specialization is creating, to quote a foreign educationist, "educated barbarians". The urge for

acquiring knowledge is very much lacking in the students; accumulation of information, plain and simple, is being confused as knowledge; education is being equated with anyhow securing a certificate from the board of education or university, a passport for applying for employment; education has no purpose other than getting a passport for employment. This is the general psychology among the students. In a class-divided society though education, being a superstructure of the economic base of the given society, serves the interests of the ruling class yet certain scopes and opportunities are available to the people for pursuit of knowledge even under capitalism. But in our country, thanks to the attempts by the Government and the educational authorities, education has objectively degenerated into coming out of the flaming pyre of examination successfully by hook or crook and securing a certificate or a diploma, a passport for applying for a job. This mentality in the background of general moral and cultural degeneration associated with decadent bourgeois culture and sense of moral values has given birth to mass copying by the examinees in examinations. In the prevailing conditions, therefore, it will be naive to believe that the steeply falling academic standard can be greatly improved by simply changing the pattern of education, the system of examination or structure of the education system without making serious attempts to stem the tide of increasing moral and cultural degeneration among the people in general and the students and youths in particular. It should also be noted that greater the influence of the Congress(R) and the big so-called left parties among the people in general and the students and youths in particular, the greater is the tendency to more cultural and moral

depravity. The whole problem, thus, is basically linked with the problem of establishing a really revolutionary working class leadership and not the leadership of fake communist parties in the country.

What may be the reason for some of the states to give up the new scheme and go back to the old scheme of 10-years school course followed by four years' studies in the college? It is known to all that, in order to develop India as a powerful capitalist country in the shortest possible time, the ruling bourgeoisie wanted rapid industrialization of the country requiring technically educated persons in large numbers. Hence, was technological bias in education curtailing facilities for studies in humanities and encouraging the students to take up vocational and technical education in place of higher education and become earning members of the family. But in the present era of imperialism, *i. e.* moribund capitalism and proletarian revolution, more so in a relatively under-developed capitalist country like ours, capitalism is incapable of carrying out industrial revolution and opening the door of uninterrupted industrialization of the country. "The little industrial development which India has made is already associated with a shadow of crisis," as commented by Com. Shibdas Ghosh, General Secretary of the SUCI and one of the outstanding Marxist-Leninist thinkers of the day, several years back. As a result, more than sixty-six thousand engineers and lakhs of other technically trained hands are unemployed, thereby throwing off the gear the technical bias in the new scheme of education of 11-years school course followed by 3-years degree course. Herein lies the necessity of the ruling class to give up technical bias and

reverting to the old scheme for the time being.

Judged by what has been discussed hereinbefore, there is no denying the fact that re-introduction of the old scheme with 10-years schooling followed by 2-years junior college course further followed by 2-years degree course will be relatively better. Some educationists have recommended that the Honours course should be of three years' duration. This is certainly debatable and requires a thorough examination. There may be some grounds for making the Honours course one year longer in view of the rapidly developing branches of disciplines in humanities, science, etc. yet it should not be forgotten that in a country like ours with people suffering from appalling poverty extension of the period of study by one year and consequent additional financial burden, particularly when the Government makes no contribution to alleviate the distress of the financially crippled guardians, must be taken into due consideration before the period is actually extended. Some others have recommended that the existing higher secondary schools should be converted into junior colleges. This suggestion can be accepted only if the Government comes forward with adequate and necessary financial assistance to upgrade these schools to the required standard of colleges with facilities for better teaching, library and laboratory works otherwise simple conversion into junior colleges with no means to impart proper education will only lower the academic standard still further. But in case the existing higher secondary schools are converted into 10-class schools, the existing members of staff must be retained and there must not be any retrenchment. With more teachers, better teacher-student ratio, relatively better qualified teachers and better facilities for library and laboratory

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Cong. (R) 'Movement' against Rise in Prices

Thanks to the sectarian, disruptive and left-opportunistic politics of the CPI (M) and its drive to physically liquidate the members, supporters and sympathisers of other left and democratic parties and thereby establish its monopoly control in West Bengal and consequent break-down of the United Front leading to serious demoralization and frustration among the common men of the state, the Congress (R) has succeeded fairly well not only in rehabilitating itself in the political life but also in extending its influence tremendously in West Bengal. In 1966, the Congress—by then it was not split—did not dare hold a public meeting in Calcutta.

In 1971, the Congress (R) is not only holding very big public meetings; its storm-troopers, the so-called volunteers of the Youth Congress (R) and the Chhatra Parishad mostly consisting of armed anti-social elements with the backing of the administration and police are carrying on rampage against left and democratic parties, setting fire to and otherwise destroying their party offices, physically assaulting and killing their workers and threatening common men of dire consequences in case they still continue to back the left and democratic parties. The administration too is lending its helpful hands in this general onslaughts against the left and democratic parties and forces in West Bengal by not only detaining without trial on complaints by the Congress (R) the workers of these parties but also brutally killing them in Thana lock-up and inside jails. The "non-violent" Congress creed has outshone many many times the most hated days of Mr. Anderson in intensity and magnitude of terrorism, barbarous brutality and genocide against the people in the unfortunate state of West Bengal.

But fascism does not adopt only the policy of ruthless attack against the people fighting for their rights. It also tries to confuse the people in order to enlist popular support behind it. It seems, the afore-said

storm-troopers of the Congress (R) are past masters in the nefarious game of confusing the people, at least that section of the people which is politically most unconscious and, hence, most easily liable to fall a victim to Congress (R) propaganda. These storm-troopers have now started a 'movement' against rising prices, a task which the left and democratic parties had all through taken up but which they are not in a position to take now because of disunity among them for CPI (M) politics and activities.

But what sort of a 'movement' the fire-eating volunteers of the Youth Congress (R) and the Chhatra Parishad are conducting against rising prices of essential commodities and against whom? Have they directed their fire against the big sharks who manipulate prices by hoarding and cornering articles of daily use, creating their artificial scarcity in the market and then manipulating the prices to fleece the consuming public? Oh! No; How can they do it? The black-marketeers too are voters and not only voters, they control thousands of votes and contribute crores of rupees to the Congress (R) election fund so as to enable the 'democratic socialist' Congress (R)-wallahs to purchase votes of millions of the poor people (From 1962-63 to February 1970 political donations made by different companies to the

Congress amounted to Rs. 2 crores 91 lakhs 98 thousands and 298 over and above the huge amounts given individually by the monopolists which would amount to several more crores). So, the volunteers conducted their anti-price-rise 'movement' by not taking their meals (one now knows very well the modus operandi of these mass hunger-strikes and the reason why in spite of hunger-strikes the strikers lose no body-weight) against the petty vegetable-sellers in some local bazars. Really a wonderful 'movement' against rising prices of essential commodities!

Even a school-boy now knows that present rise in prices of essential commodities is mainly due to wrong fiscal and monetary policies of the Government and price manipulation by the black-marketeer sharks. Even the Union Finance Minister, Shri Chavan, had been forced to admit that "It is on the central question of adequate supplies and prudent fiscal and monetary policies that efforts at maintaining a stable price level hinge." Had the Congress (R) and its storm-troopers been honest and serious in checking rise in prices and bringing the prices of essential commodities within the easy reach of common men in our country then they would have ensured adequate supplies of such commodities by taking strong measures against the hoarders, speculators, black-marketeers and price-manipulators as also by introducing all-out state trading in these commodities and adopted "prudent fiscal and monetary policies". No body prevented them from doing it; rather every one belonging to the ordinary consuming public has been demanding it for a long time.

Reality today is that compared to August, 1939 the prices have increased by more than seven and a half times and during the last 15 years prices have exactly doubled.

But why? First, the government has given free hand to the anti-social tycoons to manipulate prices by adopting anti-people measures like hoarding, cornering, speculating, etc. If the government so desires, it can firmly deal with these anti-social businessmen and check the problem of artificial short supply of essential commodities in the market. By introducing state trading and if necessary, rationing, in case there is genuine short supply compared to effective demand, the government could take the wind out of the sails of the price-manipulating monopolists. But far from taking these actions the government has all through been soft to these unscrupulous businessmen and used the instruments of credit policies in such a way as to help them get cheap credit from banks, more effectively corner goods and manipulate prices to gain maximum profit at the cost of the people.

Secondly, deficit financing continues to mount. The situation is being aggravated due to continued burden of unproductive expenditure. The government palpably is least willing to curb deficit financing. Otherwise it would not have allowed to increase total currency in notes, coins, etc. with the public by Rs. 2602'07 crores during the 19 years following 1950-51. This was the position in March, 1970. The situation has now become far more serious. And, thirdly, as far as fiscal policy is concerned, it is still worse. It is admitted on all hands that indirect taxes like excise duties are never paid by the producers who shift the burden of taxation on to the shoulders of the general consumers by increasing prices of the articles on which the taxes are imposed. More often than not, the increase thus made in the prices is more than the quantum of tax imposed, a subtle device of the monopolists to earn

Price Rise

extra profit on the pretext of higher or new taxation. Nevertheless, the government has been continuously increasing the incidence of indirect taxes on essential commodities and bringing new and newer articles under the mischief of indirect taxation. It will be proved by the fact that Central excise duties have gone up from Rs. 71'50 crores in 1950-51 to Rs. 1823'50 crores in 1970-71, an increase of about twenty-five times. Add to it Central sales tax, sales tax by the state governments, sales tax on motor spirits, etc., etc., and you can imagine the weight of the total burden.

In the face of these facts does not the perorations by the Congress(R) leaders about curbing rise in prices sound rather hypocritical? Does not the 'movement' against rising prices by the Youth Congress(R) and the Chatra Parishad volunteers in West Bengal tantamount to a sham show meant to befool the politically unconscious people, given to credulity, and prepare grounds for future elections? It may be argued that the West Bengal Government has arrested some black-marketeers and, so, its sincerity to check rise in prices should not be questioned. Sorry, we can't agree. For, there is rumour in the air that these are the black-marketeers who refused to oblige some big guns in the Congress(R) by parting with a portion of the huge profits they had so long made towards the Congress(R) election fund and just to teach them a lesson and ultimately bring them within the Congress(R) fold the pressure of preventive detention without trial has been applied by the administration. Such pressure tactic has successfully worked in case of anti-social and so-called "extremist" elements many of whom have now joined as storm-trooper of the Congress(R) on condition of which they have been released from jails. Then why shall it not work now? And about

Attack on Viswa Bharati University

The Ordinance on the Viswa Bharati University has now been replaced by an Act in the Parliament. There is nothing to be surprised at it, as no body expected a different result. Backed by brute majority in the Lok Sabha, Sm. Indira Gandhi's Government at the Centre has now thought it opportune to strike a cruel blow on the academic world in our country.

By the Act, as it was in the Ordinance, the Central Government has assigned to itself the power to take over the administration of the Viswa Bharati University. The new law has drastically reduced the size of different bodies of the University, like the Court, Executive Council and the Academic council, completely done away with election and elected members in these bodies, vested unlimited powers of control over these bodies in the Visitor who would be no other than the President of India and provided indiscriminate powers to the authorities to take disciplinary actions against the officers, teachers and other employees of the University. In fact, the Act has reduced the University to the position of a directorate under the Central Education Department taking away its autonomy even in academic sphere.

punishment by courts of law, the less said, the better. We know of a case of fine of Rs. ten only by a court of law for hoarding in order to black-market ten thousand tins and bottles of baby food. So it will be suicidal to place faith on the perorations of the Congress(R) leaders about curbing the price spirals. Only a united democratic mass movement worth the name can bring some relief to the peoples. In the present state of Emergency in our country and in the interest of defence of the country against Pak military attack such an action against black-marketeers and hoarders is essentially necessary. For otherwise, the present situation will turn to be a better heaven for the black-marketing sharks.

The plea of the Central Government for taking such a palpably undemocratic measure may be had from the Press note released from the Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi, immediately before the promulgation of the Ordinance. It, *inter alia*, contains the following: "Of late disquieting reports have been received about the activities of extremists on the campus of Viswa Bharati.... There were cases of arson, stabbing and indiscipline in the university resulting in heavy damage to equipment, property, fittings and furniture of the various buildings and the death of an office superintendent.... Apart from the incidents of violence, the university also faced serious difficulties in its day-to-day working.... After examination of reports of disturbance, the Government therefore came to the conclusion that it was necessary to bring about an immediate change in the administrative bodies of the university and that it was necessary to provide for nominated university bodies in place of elected ones."

It is not our point that the state of affairs in the Viswa Bharati University was ideal and that there was nothing left to be desired. Nothing like that. The Viswa Bharati University also, like almost all other universities in our country, suffers from serious ills which have naturally caused serious resentment among the informed members of the public. But will the situation improve in any way by just reducing the Viswa Bharati University into an appendage of the Union Education Ministry? Rather, our past

experience tells us that such curtailment of autonomy of educational institutions and establishment of control of the government over them had created more chaos and more serious and new and newer evils in the academic world. It should be borne in mind that autocratic administration by bureaucracy is no remedy for the various ills from which our universities, boards of education and other educational institutions are suffering today. The remedy lies in expanding and strengthening their autonomy in the true sense of the term and introducing truly democratic, secular and scientific education and education system in the country.

It is not our point also that the previous Act, the Parliamentary Act XXIX of 1951, to look after the administration of the Viswa Bharati University, which the present Act has replaced, was democratic. Under the previous Act also the different bodies of the University were full of members nominated by the government. For example, the Executive Council had only two elected representatives from the Alumni Association among its total fifteen members; the Academic Council also had only seven members elected by the University teachers among its forty-seven members. But the old Act was not as draconian as the present one which has completely done away with election and elected members in different bodies of the University. Had nominated bodies in place of elected ones been the panacea for the ills the Viswa Bharati University is alleged to be suffering from, as the Union Government now seeks to imply in the above-mentioned Press note, then the ills would not have taken place at all under the old Act which equally provided for virtual

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Educational Reforms to be Considered in the Perspective of Socialist Revolution

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work, compared to the existing 10-class schools, the existing higher secondary schools will be better 10-class schools. Of course, the existing 10-class schools also should have to be improved. For, there cannot be two sets of schools imparting the same course of studies; that would be academically unsound.

Education will still then remain the super-structure of the capitalist base in our country. There is no doubt that real advancement of learning can take place only under socialism when there will be not only no exploitation of man by man but also no national oppression by the dominant nationality on the minority nationalities in our country. But this does not in any way mean that till socialism is established our people shall remain idle and make no serious effort to reform the present education system. "On the contrary", to quote our beloved leader and teacher, Com. Shibdas Ghosh, "the democratic forces of our country should resolutely fight for bringing in educational reforms not only to make education cheap, universal and secular in the truest sense of the term but also to democratise the entire educational system to conform with the democratic principles of life. Therefore, the aim of any reform in our education system should be to strengthen the democratic struggle of the masses for completing the unaccomplished tasks of bourgeois-democratic or national-democratic revolution, namely, the social and cultural revolution, which is long over-due in our country." (*Preface to Bartaman Siksha Paddhati Aur Oos Par Ek Dristikone*)

Besides, "to achieve the unity of our people our education system should be really secular and free from religious tutelage. Thanks to the so-called nationalist leaders

and the leaders of the radical left movements, secularism has come to mean virtually, in our country, equal encouragement to all religions by the state. Truly speaking, this is not the proper meaning of secularism. In actuality secularism means non-recognition of any super-natural entity. A secular state puts religion at its proper place by making religion a purely personal affair of faith having no connection with the state and no bearing on politics, social actions and education system in the country. In a secular state both the believers as well as the non-believers enjoy equal rights and opportunities. ** So, the attitude of a secular state shall be that it will neither encourage religious faith nor obstruct it. ** To reform education in accordance with the democratic principles of life, it is the bounden duty of the democratic forces to, first of all, free education completely from the influence of religion. But contrary to this expectation, of late, we are finding that our education system is increasingly aiming at incorporating religion with education by including religious education in the curriculum to best serve the interests of the reactionary forces of our country. ** It is no wonder, therefore, that the products of our present education system are showing distinct inclination towards parochialism, communalism and casteism." (*Ibid*)

Then again, "our education system is becoming more and more restrictive and undemocratic. The demand for free universal education of the pre-independence days is getting the worst jolt from the present rulers of the country. Under the pretext of improving the standard of education, even the existing scopes of education, specially higher education, are being squeezed

and education is being made more costly, resulting in curtailment of education." (*Ibid*) This anti-people outlook in the sphere of education must go and clear road for free universal education upto the highest standard must be paved. It may be necessary to do it by stages but phased programmes for it, in that case, must be immediately adopted and honestly implemented. Furthermore, "Courses of studies are being drawn up in such a way as to develop neglect for those subjects that can make our students acquainted with the latest modern intricate scientific and revolutionary thinking of the world and foster human values. *** Courses of studies whether in humanities or in science are providing absolutely mechanical knowledge divorced from the very essence of the discipline concerned." (*Ibid*) For example, study of history now provides the students only with "certain informations regarding historical events without developing in them any creative knowledge of how to analyse and correlate the events of history according to the law of development of human society. The studies of science present no better picture. Physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, etc. are taught in such a way as to provide only a technical knowledge in utter disregard for the ethics and philosophy of science. As a result, the science students lack scientific bent of mind and power to approach scientifically the various problems confronting their lives." (*Ibid*) This non-scientific drawing up of curriculum, courses of studies and method of teaching must be replaced by a scientific approach so as to enable the students to have knowledge of integrated scientific system of thought covering the various branches of epistemology.

Then again, "due to lack of elementary understanding of ethics, there is a growing indifference and callous attitude towards any social problem among our students, youths and intellectuals. Instead of instilling our students with scientific and systematic reasoning, there is growing a tendency to bring about a peculiar fusion between spiritualism and science in the name of Indian heritage. This trend in our academic life is indeed alarming, as it is characteristic of fascist culture." (*Ibid*) It goes without saying that this drive for fascization of the academic world in our country must forthwith stop and steps should be taken to develop in the student the faculty of scientific and systematic reasoning.

It should be realized that "a philosophy and ideology and a given category of sense of values which play a progressive revolutionary role at a particular stage of social formation become a privilege and an instrument of reaction at a different stage of social formation. This has been the case with the ideology of bourgeois nationalism and the sense of values of bourgeois humanism." (*Ibid*) The ideology of scientific socialism and the sense of values of communism are the only way out of the present impasse and alone can correlate our patriotism with proletarian internationalism. They alone represent the collective interest of our society in the prevailing situation. "Therefore", we conclude by quoting what Com. Ghosh has said, "those who think of reforming the education system, in order to raise the moral standard of the people, will have to consider it in the broader perspective of anti-capitalist socialist revolution in our country." (*Ibid*)

Condition of Peasants in Haryana

The Congress(R), the governments run by it and the propaganda-media controlled by the state and the bourgeoisie in our country are trying their best to make our people believe that "the green revolution has transformed the economic status of the land-owning class" in our country in general, particularly in Haryana and Punjab. Bourgeois newspapers in this connection are publishing articles on the alleged "Problems of plenty for the farmer" (vide the article by Mr. M. B. Lal published in the Statesman dated 29th September last). But what is the reality?

The Punjab University in collaboration with the Economic and Statistical Department of the Haryana Government had recently conducted a survey about the condition of owner-cultivators in Haryana. According to this survey 83.5 per cent of the land-owning classes in Haryana live either below the subsistence level or at the subsistence level. Only 16.5 per cent of them are really well off. It should be noted that the survey covers *only* the owner-cultivators, i.e., the land-owning peasantry. It does not cover either the landless peasants or the agricultural labourers who do not own any land. The condition of these strata of rural population is well-known—grinding poverty and much-below-subsistence-level living are their hard lot. So, if the landless peasants and agricultural labourers owning no land are taken into account then it can be safely said without any fear of being contradicted that 90 per cent of the total rural population in Haryana live either below the subsistence level or at the subsistence level. And this is the reality after twenty-four years of independence, completion of three Five Year Plans and half-completion of the Fourth Plan, the alleged pouring out of approximately Rs. 2000 crores in the rural areas by the governments for irrigation projects, community development projects and national extension service schemes and the green revolution following them for

the whole country. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The objective result of so much expenditure of public money in the rural areas and the green revolution under the Congress(R) regime testifies to the fact that less than 10 per cent of the rural population, the rich peasants and the jotedars, have been the beneficiaries of the green revolution and huge expenditure by the state at the cost of the poor and middle class people.

The survey reveals that at the highest rung are the peasants owning land above 30 acres each. They account for 6.8 per cent of the total number of owner-cultivators in Haryana but own among themselves 22.5 per cent of the total cultivated land in the state. Their average annual income is Rs. 14,892.83.

Next below this most affluent section are those who own 20 to 30 acres of land, average size of their holdings being 22.6 acres. They constitute 9.7 per cent of the total number of owner-cultivators but own among themselves 19 per cent of the total cultivated land in the state. Their average annual income is Rs. 11,487.34. They annually save Rs. 766.26 besides an annual investment of Rs. 2,158.15.

In fact, in Haryana these two sections of owner-cultivators constituting 16.5 per cent of the total number of owner-cultivators owning among themselves 41.5 per cent of the total cultivated

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By The Way

Mr. Promod Das Gupta, the CPI (M) leader, is reported by the **People's Democracy** (issue dated November 14 last) to have said that "a party like the SUC was demanding that even the organisation which supported the dismissal of the employees should also be taken into the Joint Council." The SUC has never demanded that organisation which supports the dismissal of the 13 West Bengal State Government employees by the Government under article 311 (2) of the Constitution of India should be taken into the proposed United Council of Action. All that the SUC has been fighting for is that, to give defeat to the mounting fascistic attacks by the Government on the State Government employees, a united movement of the employees is essentially called for which, in the prevailing situation, can only be developed under a platform of broadest possible democratic unity of all the trade union organisations of the State Government employees ready to conduct united movements against the Government on the issue. Why then is Mr. Das Gupta saying what he himself knows to be palpably false? Pseudo-communists, like Goebles, are past masters in the art of cooking up stories against other parties.

A recent study has revealed that as on 31st March, 1971 there were 2397 closed industrial units in our country, the state-wise break-up figures being Andhra-559, Assam-215, Gujarat-194, Himachal Pradesh-4, Jammu and Kashmir-5, Kerala-184, Madhya Pradesh-23, Mysore-603, Orissa-59, Punjab-19, Rajasthan-121, Tamil Nadu-16, Uttar Pradesh-56 and West Bengal-336. Then, closure of industrial establishments is not only a West Bengal phenomenon nor is it due to Gherao by workers, as has all through been sought to be made out by the Congress (R), monopolists and the bourgeois Press? It is a country-wide problem created by the existing chaos-discredited crisis-ridden capitalist economy of the country aided by insatiable greed of the capitalists for super-profit and anti-people economic planning of the Congress (R) Government. The cat is out of the bag.

It is reported by the **Hindusthan Standard** (issue dated, November 12 last) that 112 members, including a founder member, of the CPI from Nowgong and Lakhimpur districts have left the party and joined the Congress (R) since the CPI's ninth all-Assam conference held in September last. The newspaper further adds, "these instances of defection seem to have upset the CPI State Council leadership." Is there any reason for being upset? The other day the Assam State leadership of the CPI hailed the Assam Congress (R) as "progressive." If the ranks of the CPI, inspired by this analysis of their leaders, now join the "progressive" Assam Congress (R), in order to further strengthen the "progressive forces within the Congress (R)" then you cannot blame them. It seems that the pull of the "progressive national bourgeoisie" is stronger than that of the protagonists of the national democratic revolution in our country.

Act on Viswa Bharati

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nominated bodies in place of elected ones.

Then again, plea has been taken of "extremist" activities, cases of arson, damage to equipment, property, fittings and furniture, and of stabbing and murder on the University campus. Certainly it is not the contention of the Government that these criminal acts were done by the teachers, employees and officers of the University in connivance with the elected members of the different bodies like the Executive Council and the Academic Council or the Court. The two elected representatives from the Alumni Association were certainly not "extremists." They belong to the Congress (R) so far as report goes. The seven elected representatives of the teachers in the Academic Council were not "extremists" either. In any event, they were in a minority in the Academic Council and could not impose their decision on the majority. Why then does the Government abolish the democratic process of representation through election and impose

nominated bodies? The reason is not far to seek. Whatever might be the plea of the Government, the motive behind this latest move is to further curtail the autonomy of the University, take away the democratic right of the teachers and the Alumni Association of the University to elect their representatives in the different bodies, bring the University under the thumb of the Congress (R) and the Government, make a full drive to control education and regiment thought at least in one university, weed out left and democratic elements among the teachers, officers and other employees, if any, and proceed along the fascistic path by playing upon popular sentiment against the various ills of the University and the so-called "extremist" activities of some misguided youths. The new Act, therefore, presents an ominous sign for the academic world in our country. It should be sincerely opposed by all right-thinking persons who favour truly democratic, secular and scientific education and education system and autonomy of educational institutions in

Bihar State Conference of DSO

Patna, November 30—The Bihar State Conference of All India Democratic Students' Organisation was held here on 28th November last. Delegates from six districts of the state, namely, Gaya, Arah, Chapra, Patna, Muzaffarpore and Ranchi attended the Conference. Prof. N. R. Singh presided over the Conference.

The 17-point main resolution which the Conference adopted included, among others, the demands for introduction of truly democratic, secular and scientific education, adoption of a phased programme for free and universal education upto the highest standard, abolition of seat-restriction scheme in schools and colleges, upliftment of the academic

standard and eradication of all corrupt practices from the academic world. The conference was addressed by Com. Provas Ghosh, the General Secretary, DSO and Com. Chaya Mukherjee Secretary of DSO West Bengal Branch among others. The speakers urged upon the delegates to try their best to mobilize the general students in the state under the banner of DSO.

Polit Bureau Statement on Recognition of Bangladesh

The Polit Bureau of the S U C I had issued the following statement on 8th December, last :—

"After much dilly-dallying the Government of India has at last recognised the independent sovereign People's Republic of Bangladesh. The Polit Bureau of the S U C I expresses its satisfaction at this recognition.

"The Polit Bureau expects that after complete victory in the liberation struggle the People's Republic of Bangladesh will all through follow a consistent and bold anti-imperialist policy and that the freedom-loving people there will advance their country against all odds along the path of independent development."

our country. Prof. Sukomal Das Gupta, member of the Senate, Calcutta University, a leader of the West Bengal College and University Teachers' Association and President of the Bengal Primary Teachers' Association has appealed to different organisations of teachers, students, intellectuals, employees connected with education and youths to come forward and unitedly resist the new attack by the Union Government and the Congress (R) on the academic world in general and autonomy of the University in particular.

Haryana Peasants

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land are well off. This is one side of the picture.

On the other side are those who own land upto 5 acres, the average size of their holding being 3.1 acres. They constitute 27.8 per cent of the total number of owner-cultivators but own among themselves only 7.4 per cent of the total cultivated land. They are constantly under debt having an annual deficit of Rs. 668'69.

Above this poorest section stand those who own land from 5 to 10 acres, the average size of their holdings being 7 acres. They constitute 29.1 per cent of the total number of owner-cultivators but own among themselves 20.5 per cent of the total cultivated land in the state. They too have an annual deficit of Rs. 485.00.

These two sections constitute 56.9 per cent of the total number of owner-cultivators but own among

themselves 27.9 per cent of the total cultivated land in the state. They occupy the lowest two rungs of the social ladder.

The last category owning land from 10 to 20 acres constitutes 26.6 per cent of the total number of owner-cultivators but owns among themselves 30.6 per cent of the total cultivated land in the state. Their average annual income is Rs. 7,035'83 and net annual saving Rs. 441'00. They are middle peasants.

Unity of the 83.5 per cent of the owner-cultivators consisting of the poor and middle peasants with the landless peasants and agricultural labourers for massive movements for increase in wages of the agricultural labourers, fixation of working hours to a maximum of eight hours a day, no land revenue for uneconomic holdings, permanent moratorium on old debts in case of the poor, drastic reduction by suitable legislation of rate of interest, fair prices of agricultural produce of poor and middle peasants, etc., etc. is called for with particular emphasis for developing closest unity of the poor peasants, the landless peasants and the agricultural labourers in rural areas.

Bangladesh Convention

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national independence, and wished wholeheartedly that a real revolutionary government representing the genuine interests of the people of Bangladesh would be formed through the victory of the armed freedom struggle now going on there. He also demanded immediate recognition by the Government of India of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.